

FEB 18 2000

# CENTRAL WASHINGTON

MAIN OFFICE

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P.O. Box 649

Waterville, Washington 98858-0649



# GRAIN GROWERS, INC.

## Comments for the Federal Caucus Public Meeting

My name is John Anderson, and I am the CEO/General Manager of Central Washington Grain Growers, Inc., a cooperative with over 1,500 producer/landlord members.

We oppose dam breaching. It is not the answer to the issue of better conserving our fish resource, but is an example of an extreme measure, the result of which will be much higher costs to specific industries and the public in general, without an equal and offsetting benefit to conservancy of fish.

Farmers are pro-environment. I contend that no group of people is better at being conservationists than farmers, due to their multi-generational tie to and respect for their land and the recognized benefit to themselves and their heirs of being good stewards of the land on which they produce their crops.

Commerce on the rivers is critical to farmers getting their crops to market. Rail line abandonments in recent years have made barge traffic even more critical to a greater number of farmers as the only viable means of transporting their crops to the export market facilities.

Breaching would result in a significant increase in truck traffic from areas that currently depend on the lower Snake River for moving grain by barge. This increase in truck traffic will result in significant increases in costs to the public, both in terms of road maintenance and safety issues.

Currently, the supply of equipment and the rates for the modes used for grain movement, truck/barge and rail, are well-balanced and are based on historical usage and competitive

Farmer Owned

Farmer Controlled

Cooperative

Grain Marketing Offices:

Almira  
639-2451

Coulee City  
632-5681

Hartline  
639-2531

Krupp  
345-2521

Mansfield  
683-1111

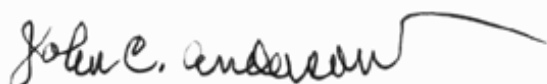
Waterville  
745-8551

Wilbur  
647-5510

rates. Breaching would result in significant and immediate imbalance in the infrastructure of grain transportation. The resultant cost increases, while initially borne by the shipper, would all be passed on to the farmer through higher transportation, handling and storage charges. Federal responsibility for mitigation of breaching impacts to infrastructure is limited to damage directly caused by drawdown. So, in effect, all of the extra costs would be placed on the shoulders of producers who have been, are now, and likely will be in the foreseeable future, under an extreme financial burden due to the depressed economy in agriculture.

There are better answers to conserving salmon than the extreme measure of dam breaching. Let us proceed in our conservancy efforts by other means, ones that don't come at such a high cost, without an offsetting benefit to the public good.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John C. Anderson". The signature is written in dark ink and includes a long, sweeping horizontal flourish at the end.

John C. Anderson, CEO/General Manager  
CENTRAL WASHINGTON GRAIN GROWERS, INC.  
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Waterville, WA 98858-0649